

2011 Annual Report

Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority
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Message from the Administrator

Fiscal 2011 was a year of great economic uncertainty as revenue and budget issues loomed large at both the federal and state levels. The Commonwealth, once again, continued to only level fund the regional authority program, resulting in further reductions in funding for operating costs. At the federal level, there has been discussion about how the overall budget deficit will affect transit funding in the upcoming federal fiscal year.



Francis J. Gay, Administrator

However, there are some bright lights on the horizon. GATRA continues to attract new riders and increase ridership even as funding for operations continues to get tighter and tighter. Also, the Commonwealth has initiated two very promising studies; one that will look at ways to enhance regional transit authority services, and another to examine the cost implications of ADA related demand response service within The Ride in the Boston area as well as outlying communities covered by the RTAs.

With the outcomes of the studies expected in Fiscal 2012, we look forward to new directions in policy at the state level. Until then, GATRA and the other RTAs will closely monitor the work the Commonwealth's consultants are doing and we will continue to make the message known that there is a need for more and expanded services throughout the RTA network.

About the Authority

The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) was created in 1976 pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 161B of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Authority is given general responsibility to develop, finance, and contract for the operations of mass transportation facilities and services within its territory, which consists of the Cities of Attleboro and Taunton, and the Towns of Bellingham, Berkley, Carver, Dighton, Duxbury, Foxboro, Franklin, Kingston, Lakeville, Mansfield, Marshfield, Medway, Middleborough, Norfolk, North Attleboro, Norton, Pembroke, Plainville, Plymouth, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Wareham, and Wrentham.

Organization, Management & Overview

During fiscal year 2011, GATRA operated several modes of transportation: regular fixed route service, Dial-A-Ride service, commuter shuttle service, and brokerage transportation service with area social service agencies. Fixed route bus or shuttle services were provided to 17 communities. The buses traveled 1,520,477 miles and made more than 736,500 passenger trips.

All 26 member communities have demand response (Dial-A-Ride) services for people with disabilities and seniors. In addition, GATRA plays a vital role in the provision of Commuter Rail service to Boston by providing shuttle services to MBTA stations in the towns of Bellingham, Franklin, Lakeville, Norton, Mansfield, Medway, Middleborough, Pembroke, and Wareham.

GATRA also partners with the MBTA on many different fronts including the management of the MBTA parking and train facility in Attleboro as well as the train station facility in Mansfield.

The major highlights of fiscal year 2011 include:

- > **Middleborough Taunton Connection Services** - In November 2010, a new reservation service between Middleborough and Taunton was added. The service operates Monday, Wednesday and Friday and departs the Middleborough Council on Aging three times daily for medical or shopping related needs.
- > **New MBTA Shuttle Services** - In fiscal year 2011, GATRA added shuttle services that take commuters in Bellingham and Pembroke to MBTA rail stations in neighboring towns.
- > **New Commuter Service** - As part of a state wide initiative to get people back to work, GATRA launched Route 3 – a new commuter service between the Silver City Galleria Mall and the Myles Standish Industrial Park in Taunton.
- > **Capital Improvement Projects** - With funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, GATRA completed the rehabilitation of the historic Attleboro Commuter Rail Station and made improvements for pedestrian access at the Attleboro bus station.
- > **Plymouth Transportation Center** - GATRA and the Town of Plymouth began a site selection study to determine the location of a new transportation and parking center in downtown Plymouth.
- > **GATRA Receives 9 New Vans** - GATRA purchased 9 new wheelchair-accessible vehicles for its Dial-A-Ride operations, improving transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities.
- > **Commission Addresses Paratransit Services in MA** - In April, Governor Patrick established a Commission for the Reform of Community, Social Service and Paratransit Transportation Services in the Commonwealth. Several public forums were scheduled. The Commission heard suggestions on ways to enhance current paratransit services in the state.
- > **Mobility Management Takes Center Stage** - GATRA added a new full-time Mobility Management Manager to identify needs and develop programs designed to improve transportation services and simplify access to employment, healthcare, education, and other community activities.

Ridership Statistics

In fiscal year 2011 GATRA's ridership jumped by more than 159,500 riders translating to an increase of 8.8% over the same period in 2010.

2011

	Fixed Route	Demand Response	Human Services Brokerage	Total Ridership
Annual Ridership	736,757	225,181	991,311	1,953,249

Breakdown of Fixed Route and Demand Response services on following page.

2010

	Fixed Route	Demand Response	Human Services Brokerage	Total Ridership
Annual Ridership	649,515	220,008	924,219	1,793,742

2009

	Fixed Route	Demand Response	Human Services Brokerage	Total Ridership
Annual Ridership	592,841	217,174	841,352	1,651,367

Fixed Route by Service Area	Unlinked Passenger Trips
Attleboro/Taunton	457,546
Plymouth Area Link (PAL)	99,699
Marshfield/Duxbury/Kingston (SAIL)	30,681
Onset Wareham Link (OWL)	81,218
Franklin Area Bus (FAB)	10,742
Norton/Mansfield Route 140	26,508
Bellingham Commuter Shuttle	1,530
Medway Commuter Shuttle	15,165
Middleborough Downtown Shuttle	12,328
Pembroke Commuter Shuttle	1,340
Total Fixed Route	736,757

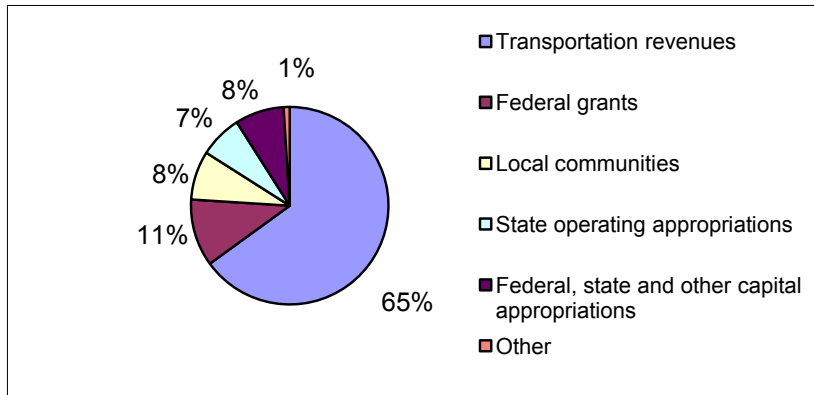
Demand Response by Town	Unlinked Passenger Trips
United Dial-A-Ride (Foxboro, Franklin, Norfolk, Wrentham)	14,616
Attleboro/Taunton	105,789
Bellingham	3,600
Carver	6,918
Duxbury	5,625
Kingston	5,284
Lakeville	2,749
Mansfield	16,548
Marshfield	4,484
Medway	2,113
Middleborough	8,608
Pembroke	7,899
Plainville	3,769
Plymouth	22,258
Wareham	12,906
Wrentham	2,015
Total Demand Response	225,181

Finance

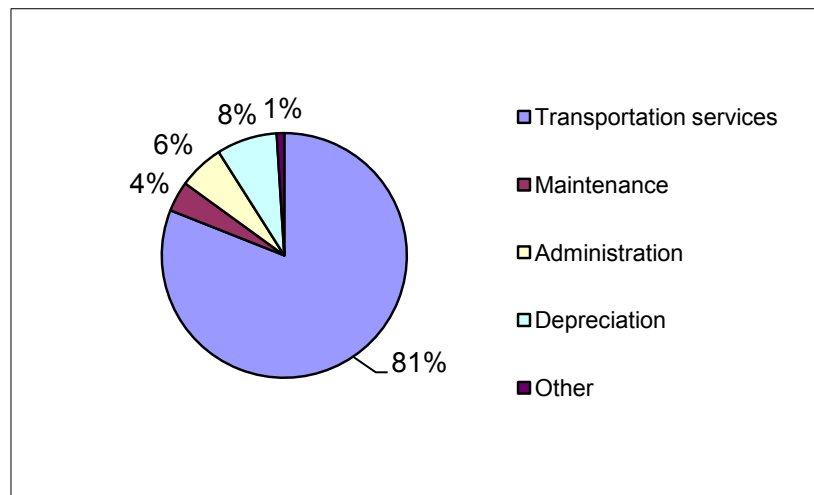
Management's Discussion and Analysis - Unaudited (for the year ended June 30, 2011)

The revenues and expenses by source are delineated in the following graphs:

Revenues by Source:



Expenses by Source:



Financial Ratios

"Working Capital" is the amount by which current assets exceed current liabilities. The Current Ratio, which compares current assets to current liabilities, is an indicator of the ability to pay current obligations.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Working Capital	\$ 9,243,000	\$ 7,848,000
Current ratio	3:1	3:1

The working capital and current ratio indicate that the Authority has an excellent ability to meet current obligations.

"Liabilities to Net Assets" indicates the extent of borrowing.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Liabilities to net assets	99%	93%

This increase was caused primarily by increases in liabilities related to transportation vendors, capital asset vendors and an increase in the revenue anticipation note.

Legislative Highlights & Recommendations

Legislative successes included the reinstitution of Section 11 of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) legislation Chapter 161B providing for Commonwealth backing of RTA borrowings. The Regional Transit Authority program continues to be underfunded creating deficits for the Transit Authority program operations. Even though the RTAs received level funding in reality it is a reduction of funding to cover RTA operating costs.

Capital funding has also been an issue. This problem will continue to escalate as the capital needs for the Regional Transit Authorities grow over the next couple of years. The recent use of toll credits as a match toward the 20% for federal funds has allowed some capital projects to move ahead.

The Regional Transit Authority program has been level funded for several years now, which is causing a significant hardship in the continued operation of services. In Fiscal Year 2010 the only solution for operating was the receipt of Federal stimulus funds to be used towards operations. This funding ended in Fiscal Year 2011 and again the Authority will be faced with cutting service and raising fares if no additional operating funds are made available through the State budgeting process. In addition, GATRA is at fifty percent State Contract Assistance and local contribution, another issue to be addressed in the legislature. The most important legislative initiative is to develop a plan to forward fund the Regional Transit Authority program, currently the only line item in the State budget that is still reimbursable. Retroactive reimbursement makes it very hard to plan. The RTAs don't know how much money they will have until the year is already over. If the legislature can deal with the funding of the transit authority program in total it would make a big difference in how the program can expand.

An additional source of operating revenue for the Regional Transit Authorities would be the opportunity to create Enterprise Funds. Where Authorities are being proactive in finding sources of funding to operate systems and maintain capital items we are penalized for not having a mechanism to use these funds through an Enterprise account to pay for future maintenance.

Comprehensive Program for Mass Transit

GATRA works very closely with both the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and Old Colony Planning Commission (OCPC) in implementing the recommendations for transit services in Regional Transportation Plans. Within the Regional Transportation Plans are sections that deal with public transportation. Both agencies ask for additional operating funds for public transit services to be expanded in growing communities and to address new development which has taken place in Southeastern Massachusetts. The specific recommendations made in the Regional Transportation Plans will be made part of GATRA's goals for expanding local public transportation services.

Several new communities have joined GATRA. These communities need public transit services and GATRA is working with them to identify needs to incorporate into the GATRA comprehensive transportation program.

In Fiscal Year 2011 SRPEDD, and other planning agencies, updated the Regional Transportation Plans. These plans look at both short and long term issues and goals for the region. A key component to the plan is the need for more operating funds for public transportation services in the GATRA region. Most GATRA bus routes only operate on an hourly schedule with no peak hour services available. It precludes a lot of people that could use public transportation to get to employment. It also means that most of our services are basic lifeline services for people who have no other choice. We must move public transit systems outside the MBTA to become more convenient for people to make the choice to use public transit.

Advisory Board Members

Community	Chair	Designee
Attleboro	Mayor Kevin Dumas	Mayor Kevin Dumas
Bellingham	Michael Connor	Laura DeMattia
Berkley	Stephen R. Castellina	Mark Pettey, Jr.
Carver	Francis Casey	John Mickevich
Dighton	E. Bud Whalon	Alice Souza
Duxbury	Shawn Dahlen	Joanne Moore
Foxborough	Larry Harrington	Vicki Lowe
Franklin	Scott Mason	Scott Mason
Kingston	Richard J. Arruda	Peter Boncek
Lakeville	Stephen Olivier	Derek Maksy
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	Gale Farrugia
Marshfield	Patricia J. Reilly	Paul Halkiotis
Medway	Dennis Crowley	Missy Dziczek
Middleborough	Alfred P. Rullo, Jr.	Andrea Priest
Norfolk	Robert J. Garrity	Jack Hathaway
North Attleboro	John Rhyno	Mark Fisher
Norton	Brad Bramwell	Richard Leitch
Pembroke	Willard J. Boulter, Jr.	Hilary Wilson
Plainville	Robert Rose	Leland Ross, Jr.
Plymouth	William P. Hallisey, Jr.	Patrick O'Brien
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	Joyce Rodrigue
Rehoboth	Kenneth Foley	Sally Knox
Seekonk	David Parker	Bernie Huck
Taunton	Mayor Charles Crowley	Mayor Charles Crowley
Wareham	Jane Donahue	Susan Green
Wrentham	Bob Cohen	Janet Angelico

Disabled Commuter Representative - Sheila Ronkin, Bellingham

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www.gatra.org

